Approved For Release 1999/09/16 : CIA-RDP72-00450R000100260028-4

31 JANUARY 1958

MEMORANDUM TO: EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
SUGGESTION AWARDS COMMITTEE

SUBJECT : SUGGESTION NO. 2906

1. I AM NOT SUFFICIENTLY FAMILIAR WITH THE USES TO WHICH ALL THE PRESENT FORMS ARE PUT, BUT I AM ABSOLUTELY PERSUADED THAT WE ARE WASTING UNTOLD MANHOURS ON FORMS OF A KIND TO WHICH THE SUGGESTOR OBJECTS, AND THAT THE SUGGESTOR IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

2. OF COURSE IT WILL NEVER DO ANY GOOD TO REFER SUCH SUGGESTIONS TO THE OFFICES INVOLVED ONE AFTER THE OTHER. EACH OFFICE WILL FIND ITS OWN FORM ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL AND PERFECT FOR ITS PURPOSES. AND IT MAY WELL BE, IF YOU GRANT THAT THOSE PURPOSES ARE THEMSELVES ESSENTIAL AND UNCHANGEABLE.

3. THE QUESTION THAT REALLY NEEDS ASKING IS NOT WHETHER A GIVEN FORM MEETS THE INTENDED PURPOSE BETTER THAN ANY OTHER, BUT WHETHER THE PURPOSE ITSELF IS ESSENTIAL.

4. IN MY OWN WORK IN SIMPLIFYING PROCEDURES I FOUND THAT MANY OF THE COMPLEXITIES AROSE FROM FAILURE TO QUESTION ASSUMPTIONS. IF THE ASSUMPTIONS WERE IN FACT SOUND, THE COMPLEXITIES WERE NECESSARY; BUT IT IS ASTONISHING HOW OFTEN THE WHOLE STRUCTURE COLLAPSED AS SOON AS YOU AKSED THE QUESTION "WHY?"

5. I AM CONVINCED THAT THIS IS TRUE OF A VERY LARGE PART OF ALL THE BUREAUCRATIC PAPER WORK REQUIRED OF PEOPLE WHO ARE HIRED TO BE INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS.

6. THE WAY TO CHANGE THIS IS NOT TO SUBMIT SUGGESTIONS TO INTERESTED PARTIES BUT TO GET AUTHORITY TO KNOCK SOME HEADS TOGETHER AND TO ENFORCE TRUE SIMPLIFICATION.

7. I WISH THE MANAGEMENT STAFF LUCK, AND RECOMMEND THAT SUGGESTION NO. 2906 BE USED FOR A VIGOROUS ATTACK ON THE PROBLEM.

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